



Focus on Fleet

From the State Fleet Manager

Every Drop Counts.

At least, that's what I keep telling everybody around here. Since the new budget was announced at the beginning of the current fiscal year, State Fleet has searched high and low for opportunities to save taxpayers' money.

We already run a pretty tight ship, so there wasn't much room for cuts, but we have cut back on some things anyway, just as every other agency has had to do this year.

These are difficult times for many State agencies. Agencies may have to choose between providing services and keeping employees. In many cases, the

employees are longtime friends. How do you choose?

Among the things we have done here, and will continue to do in the future, are these:

- We're re-evaluating the **vehicle retention schedule**. Although many vehicles are at death's door when they hit the minimum mileage, others are good for well over 100,000 miles. We'll be taking service records, average vehicle life, and other factors into account.
- We are fully utilizing the GM certificates program for **rebates of \$1,000.00** on new GM vehicles. This may not seem

like much on a single car, but it really adds up over the whole fleet.

- We are also reducing the number of AFV purchases through the purchase and use of Biodiesel in the State fleet. (**See article on page 3.**)

Things don't look any better next year, but it's possible revenues will be up. In Texas, where I come from, there's a saying I think of every time we hit a little rough patch like this: **Tough times don't last; tough people do.**

But whatever happens,
Y'all be safe out there!

— Gerald W. Calk
State Fleet Manager

Important information on our new Van Driver Safety Course!
See article on page 4.

When's the next DDC?

The South Carolina State Fleet Safety Program requires that everyone who has occasion to drive a State vehicle must complete an eight-hour Defensive Driving Course and to renew that certification every four years. Although many agencies offer these courses, it is sometimes difficult for drivers to find an appropriate class for their needs. Among other things, scheduling conflicts, a shortage of seats, and a lack of current information conspire to frustrate would-be defensive driving students.

Beginning in September, however, State Fleet Management will offer current information on not only our classes but on those offered by most other agencies as well. The list includes the DDC and the DIP (Driver Improvement Program) classes as well as other safe driving courses and will be available sorted by date. It also contains contact information for each course.

For more information about the Fleet Safety Program or Defensive Driving courses, contact **Ron Tvorik**, Fleet Safety Officer, at (803) 737-1602.

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- Shop Manager Profile: Johnny Marshall
- Biodiesel Fuel Test
- Van Safety Course
- Certification Review Schedule

Fleet Manager Profiles

Introducing Patricia Bays, Department of Juvenile Justice

Pat Bays is a gracious, well-dressed woman. You might not guess from her easy-going demeanor that she shoulders enormous responsibility for one of the State's larger and more troubled agencies. Her office at the Department of Juvenile Justice off Broad River Road is neat and tidy despite the many jobs she must juggle all the time. In addition to managing the agency's 211 vehicles (both owned and leased), she also oversees the mail service, groundskeeping and safety training. She requires all of DJJ's approximately 1,000 drivers to take the Defensive Driving Course.

Safety is important to Ms. Bays, and she mentioned that even she "learned something from the DDC. You think you're a good driver, but then you pick up things that you didn't know that will help you avoid an accident."

In the nearly 24 years since Ms. Bays came to work for DJJ, she has seen many changes in the agency and in State government in general. The most challeng-

ing of these changes, according to her, is the recent recision in the budget for vehicle replacement. DJJ is currently faced with the prospect of permanently parking some its vehicles as they become less and less roadworthy, since breakdowns while transporting juveniles can be exceptionally dangerous situations for drivers.

"It all comes down to money," she says, and she couldn't be more right. At this point, DJJ has had no replacement money for two years, and it is widely projected that there will be no money this year or next. The best alternative, she says, is to lease vehicles from State Fleet Management, since they will be replaced more frequently than the vehicles her agency actually owns. DJJ currently has more vehicles over 100,000 miles than ever before. The aging of the fleet has caused an increase in the overall cost of operation.

Ms. Bays came to work for DJJ in 1977 and has managed the fleet since 1997. During her time the Department has won two awards for Best Fleet Safety Program (from State Fleet Management) in 1993 and 1995. Ms. Bays is a native Columbian. When I asked if she wanted to give any information about her family, pets or hobbies, she said, "My family is my hobby. I have a husband, two children and five granddaughters. I also have temporary custody of a rabbit that belongs to one of the grandchildren."

If there is a silver lining to the budget cuts, it has been that the loss of replacement money has forced her to examine every transaction under a microscope; this forces the fleet to operate more efficiently and within the strict guidelines she has laid down. She has even managed to contain fuel costs somewhat by asking the remote centers to cut back on the miles they drive in non-client-carrying vehicles.

Another challenge to fleet management at DJJ is the singular specialization

of their mission. The agency needs a large number of vans to transport juveniles from one part of the state to another. This significantly increases the cost per mile because the vans are less fuel-efficient than smaller vehicles. The agency must also purchase a number of midsize vehicles for use in transporting the parents or guardians of youthful offenders around the state.

DJJ no longer performs its own maintenance, but a number of years ago, when DJJ still had its own shop, the lead mechanic called her out to look at a 12-passenger van. He was very indignant because he had a real sense of pride and ownership about all the agency's vehicles, and here someone had made an unauthorized customization. Ms. Bays looked into the back of the van, and the drivers had installed two enormous speakers, each the size of a 10-year-old boy, behind the driver's and front passenger seats. From that day forth, Ms. Bays forbade anyone to install unauthorized equipment. "If it didn't come with the vehicle, you can't install it," she says.

In general, Ms. Bays says that government should place more emphasis on good fleet management practices. She points out that, while hanging on to old vehicles may save money in the short term, the cost per mile goes up significantly, and the reliability of the vehicles decreases. She tells me that she recently had to spend some two thousand dollars to replace a transmission on a vehicle that had over 100,000 miles on the odometer. Replacing vehicles would save money in the long term.

—Jonathan Eason

Note: Associate Editor Margie Valladares created the questions for this series of profiles.

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Biodiesel Testing Conducted

Reduces smoking

Biodiesel is a renewable, non-toxic fuel derived from vegetable oils such as soybean oil and canola oil, as well as recycled cooking oil. It can be blended with diesel fuel in any proportion or used in its pure form, and is commonly used in a 20% blend with petroleum diesel known as B20.

The Department of Energy published a final rule allowing the use of biodiesel credits for the alternative fuel transportation program. This rule allows States to purchase and use biodiesel as a means of satisfying their Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) purchase requirements.

This development offers the State increased flexibility in meeting the EPA's 92 mandates. During a meeting discussing alternative fuel infrastructure, United

Energy Distributors, Inc. made an offer to the State to furnish (at no cost) biodiesel fuel for testing purposes. State Fleet Management (SFM) in cooperation with the Department of Transportation (DOT) conducted a test of B20 biodiesel fuel.

The fuel test had two objectives. The first objective determined if the fuel would cause damage to State-owned equipment, while the second objective examined the impact the fuel had on vehicle performance.

Using vehicles with many different characteristics and functions, vehicle operators evaluated the test fuel relative to the vehicle's driving performance, and the amount of diesel smoke it produced. Vehicle operators also collected fuel mileage data just prior to and during the test.

The data indicated that no damage was caused by the use of the test fuel. The test results also suggest that the use

of the test fuel may decrease the amount of diesel smoke produced by the State equipment.

A review of the fuel mileage data showed a negligible difference in fuel economy. In conclusion, B20 can be used as a substitute for regular diesel fuel in State-owned equipment without suffering any fuel related damage.

SFM and DOT would like to express their sincere appreciation to United Energy Distributors, Inc. and Griffin Industries, Inc. for their generous donation of the B20 biodiesel product used in this test. Details on how the State will make biodiesel fuel credits available will be forthcoming.

Contact Jeff McCormack at (803) 737-1504 or by email at jmccormack@ogs.state.sc.us for more information about Biodiesel or about Alternative Fuel Vehicles.

Sometimes, Size Does Matter

The SFM Motor Pool offers several different types of vehicles to accomplish a wide variety of tasks. State law **requires** SFM to operate the fleet in the most efficient, most cost-effective manner possible. Accordingly, Motor Pool guidelines provide for the assignment of vehicles based on the assigned task and the number of passengers.

Some customers of the State Fleet Dispatch Office continue to request non-compact vehicles for short-term rentals. SFM is **required by law** to purchase and use the **most cost-effective vehicles** available. We have a copy of Section 1-11-310 of the Motor Vehicle Management Act for your perusal if you wish. Transportation coordinators should **strongly encourage** their drivers to make requests in accordance with these guidelines. Many drivers request large vehicles without giving thought to which vehicle offers the most efficiency. This abuse leads to situations in which the supply of larger vehicles is exhausted and we are unable to help a customer who has a bona fide need for a larger vehicle.

To ensure that larger vehicles are available when they are needed, please follow these statutorily mandated guidelines. We appreciate your cooperation!

Please contact Jimmy Lever at (803) 737-1505 if you have any questions.

—James Lever
Operations Team Leader

Parts and Tire Contracts

The **Competitive Fixed Price Statewide Auto and Light Truck Parts Contract** is in force from 7 December 2000 to 6 December 2006. This contract is the best way to control parts costs (see our interview with Johnny Marshall on page 5 for more corroboration) for your shop, and it's also statutorily mandated. We especially remind Maintenance Facility personnel to use the State contract. You should always review the discounts you receive on parts to make sure the vendor extends the correct discount to the State.

The State has also recently established a contract for tires. The contract is in force from 9 July 2001 to 30 June 2004. Maintenance facility personnel should make themselves familiar with the contract because all bulk tire purchases must be made through it.

Automotive Technician Training

State Fleet Management arranges training with manufacturers and vendors both inside and outside the State. For years, we were able to obtain most training at little or no cost to agencies. Now, however, we must pay for most training.

State Fleet Management would like to thank Burns Auto Parts for the training they have provided to State technicians. Burns has always provided training free of charge to the State. Many times training costs have been taken out of their advertising budget, according to Kayton Dawson, owner of Burns Auto Parts. Burns has presented classes on Air Conditioning, On Board Diagnostics (OBD) II, Brake Diagnostics and problem solving and many others.

Maintenance Facility Certification Review Schedule Fiscal Year 2001-2002

Forestry Columbia	20 September 2001, 9:00 AM
DOT Berkeley	4 October, 10:00 AM
Forestry Manchester	9 October, 10:00 AM
DOT Saluda	11 October, 10:00 AM
DOT Allendale	16 October, 10:00 AM
DOT Chesterfield	17 October, 10:00 AM
DOT Laurens	1 November, 10:00 AM
Forestry Kingstree	8 November, 10:00 AM
Forestry Spartanburg	13 November, 10:00 AM
DOT Calhoun	5 December, 9:30 AM
DOT Chester	6 December, 10:00 AM
DOT Newberry	11 December, 10:00 AM
Forestry Florence	13 December, 10:00 AM
DOT Orangeburg	8 January 2002, 9:30 AM
Department of Corrections	10 January, 9:00 AM
DOT Equipment Depot	15 January, 9:00 AM
DOT Clarendon	16 January, 10:00 AM
The Citadel	17 January, 10:00 AM
DOT Lancaster	23 January, 10:00 AM
DOT Bamberg	24 January, 10:00 AM
DOT Darlington	29 January, 10:00 AM
DOT West Columbia	30 January, 9:00 AM
DDSN Midlands Center	5 February, 9:00 AM
DOT Kershaw	6 February, 9:30 AM
Clemson, Pee Dee	7 February, 10:00 AM
DOT Fairfield	12 February, 9:30 AM
Mental Health (Main)	13 February, 9:00 AM
DOT Spartanburg	14 February, 10:00 AM
DOT Rock Hill	21 February, 9:30 AM
DOT York	21 February, 12:00 PM
DOT Marlboro	28 February, 10:00 AM
SLED	5 March, 9:00 AM
DOT Marion	6 March, 10:00 AM
DOT Anderson	12 March, 10:00 AM
DDSN Whitten Center	13 March, 10:00 AM
DOT Charleston	14 March, 10:00 AM
DOT Greenville	19 March, 10:00 AM
DOT Florence	20 March, 10:00 AM
John de la Howe School	26 March, 10:00 AM
Clemson Forestry Headquarters	9 April, 10:00 AM
Wildlife	11 April, 10:00 AM
DOT Williamsburg	16 April, 10:00 AM
University of South Carolina, Columbia	18 April, 9:00 AM
SC Fire Academy	23 April, 9:00 AM
DOT Beaufort	25 April, 10:00 AM
DOT Berkeley	30 April, 10:00 AM



Life Cycles under Review

In an effort to assist agencies in operating their fleets more effectively, State Fleet Management will re-evaluate and may extend life cycle recommendations on vehicles. For more information, contact Jimmy Lever at (803) 737-1505.

Tell it to Mr. Greene

All accidents or damage to vehicles leased from State Fleet Management must be reported to local law enforcement officials before the vehicle is moved. This includes hit-and-run and vandalism to vehicles. The insurance company requires an Incident/Accident Report from law enforcement authorities before processing any claim.

Agencies are responsible for contacting the nearest office of the James C. Greene Insurance Company within 24 hours of the incident or accident. Phone numbers for the James C. Greene Insurance Company are listed in the front of the Operator's Handbook, which is usually located in the glove compartment of the vehicle.

Vehicle Contracts Extended

Several vehicle contracts have been extended from last year, and the Specifications Committee is in the process of establishing vehicle contract specifications. A solicitation for bids will appear on the South Carolina Business Opportunities website (<http://www.state.sc.us/mmo/scbo/scboinfo.htm>) very soon.

Van Safety Course Dates

The Van Driver's Safety Course will be offered on 9 November and 7 December from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Agencies must register in advance to participate; class size is limited to 12 students.

In the next *Focus on Fleet* we will announce the dates of the monthly courses from January to June, 2002. Contact Ron Tvorik at (803) 737-1602 for more information.

**Be sure to visit our newly updated website at
<http://www.ogs.state.sc.us/statefleet/OGS-SF-index.phtm> !**

Shop Manager Profiles

Introducing Johnny Marshall, ETV

Johnny Marshall came to work for ETV in 1972 at the tender age of 19. At that time, the ETV fleet consisted of 13 vehicles, and the shop consisted of an air compressor and a bunch of quart cans of oil that you had to pierce with a metal spout. His first shop was made up of a tin roof atop four poles and a single-post lift.

The shop has come a long way in the last 29 years. Today's incarnation is housed in a building ETV purchased from PYA/Monarch that they used to service their truck fleet. It has three bays, two single-post lifts and a heavy-duty lift for larger trucks (it's rated up to 12,000 pounds). The fleet itself has grown from 13 to 73 vehicles. His shop is also among the neatest I have seen in my two-plus years with State Fleet. The parts room is sparsely stocked because they can order from a nearby vendor and have the materials they need in minutes. Johnny controls parts costs by ordering strictly on State contract.

The ETV shop can do almost any repair, but they don't do stationary glass (such as windshields) or over-haul transmissions, as it is more cost-effective to purchase rebuilt transmissions and install them. Johnny has one technician on staff, but does some wrench-turning himself.

Johnny tells *Focus on Fleet* that the biggest challenge he and ETV will

face in the near term is, without a doubt, the elimination of the vehicle replacement budget. He says they've been told there may not be any money next fiscal year, either. This is especially hard on a fleet that is 75% specialized vehicles. Johnny keeps the vehicles running as best he can. The prospect of not being able to replace vehicles over the next two to three years has forced him to pay particular attention to preventive measures in order to prevent breakdowns before they happen.

Although Johnny has had a number of specialized training classes, he says he finds the South Carolina Governmental Fleet Managers' Association (SCGFMA) conferences useful. He sits on the board of the organization, which (according to their mission statement) "foster[s] and promote[s] the fleet management profession." Johnny is an enthusiastic booster for the SCGFMA because, among other things, it helps him "see what's coming down the road, as far as new technologies go." He says the breakout sessions at the conference are especially helpful, and that it's good to network and pick up knowledge that will help him do his job in the future.

Johnny says that using the South Carolina Equipment Management Information System (SCEMIS) is one of the best things that ever happened to his shop. Before he began using SCEMIS, he was doing everything by hand. SCEMIS thus represents a tre-

mendous improvement over a manual system. Johnny also says that judicious use of the Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP) is an excellent tool for controlling costs, especially for his vehicles outside Columbia.

ETV has rated "Outstanding" on its last two SFM Certification reviews. Johnny puts an emphasis on safety. Aside from the obligatory safety compliance, the neatness of the shop shows Johnny's superior attention to safety.

Although Johnny had a large cache of amusing vehicle stories, this is the best. It seems one summer a good while back, Johnny was helping out at his church for a spaghetti supper when he got a call from Rudy Mancke, host of ETV's nationally acclaimed program *NatureScene*. Rudy's ETV van had broken down and he was stuck at a convenience store at an exit near Newberry, and it was already late in the day. He didn't mind the personal inconvenience so much, but he couldn't leave all the equipment unsecured, so Johnny told him to sit tight while he went and got the tow bar and the truck.

Johnny arrived a while later to find a sheepish-looking Mancke and a very, very nervous shop owner. When Johnny told Rudy how long it would be before the tow truck would arrive, Rudy decided to go exploring in the woods behind the convenience store. After not too much looking, he came back to the store with a small, non-poisonous snake in his hand. He came up behind the store owner, who was absorbed in work, and asked for a pickle jar to hold the snake for the trip back to Columbia. When the owner turned around, he took one look at the snake, leapt out of his seat, and ran all the way out the door and across the interstate before he stopped at the store on the other side. He came back an hour or so later, still visibly shaken, and he told Rudy, "Mister, I know you didn't have much choice about where to break down, but the next time you do, please don't do it at my store!"

—Jonathan Eason

Note: Associate Editor Margie Valladares created the questions for this series of profiles.



In a Hurry?

Okay, "Pay at the Pump" is great, but don't get carried away with the time savings.

If you have a story or photo you would like to see in *Focus on Fleet*, contact Jonathan Eason at (803) 737-1239 or by email at jeason@ogs.state.sc.us.

Permanent Assignment Forms Updated

Procedures also amended

A revised Permanent Assignment Form 980-R was recently sent to all Agency Transportation Coordinators. If your agency has any permanent assignments on file at State Fleet Management (SFM), you should also have received a report listing these records. Upon reviewing this information, you may find it necessary to update your records. Here are some tips concerning questions we have recently answered to assist in completing the forms. *Complete instructions are located on the back of the second page of the form.*

It is not necessary to complete a new form when making the following changes:

- **To Withdraw a vehicle and driver only:** make a copy of the file copy your agency retained, put in the vehicle Tag Number and Effective Date in Withdrawal space and forward the copy to Linda Watts at SFM.

- **To correct the Driver's License Number or Expiration Date:** send a copy of your file copy, add correct information, and circle or highlight the information to be corrected.
- **To change a Tag Number, if the vehicle is the same:** use a copy of the original form, check the Information Update Box, and put the correct Tag Number in the Vehicle Information portion of the form.

New forms should be used when **only one employee** is assigned a state-owned vehicle on a full-time basis. **If two or more persons use a vehicle it is not a permanent assignment.**

- **If an employee has been issued a new vehicle:** a new form should be completed. Completion should include the new Tag Number with the Vehicle Information.
- The Operator Information should include the full name (no nicknames), and **MUST** have the Driver's License No. with the complete Expiration Date.

- There should be three signatures on each form: the **employee must sign and date Section III**. The Supervisor and Agency Head Approvals must also be signed and dated.

If all information on the report is correct, your agency will not need to complete new forms until you have a change of drivers or vehicles.

If you have any questions about permanent assignments, please call Linda Watts at (803) 737-1508.

SCGFMA Conference

The Ninth Annual SCGFMA Conference will be held October 21-24, 2001 at Springmaid Beach Resort in Myrtle Beach. Workshops will be available on AC Systems, ABS Brakes, Alternative Fuels, and other topics of interest.

Registration information is available on the organization's website at

<http://www.scgfma.org> .

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